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FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9341
INFO RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA IMMEDIATE 9018
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 1945
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 8868
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO IMMEDIATE 3982
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 3409
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 3715
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
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RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: NC-D PARTY SUSPICIOUS, BUT VIEWS UNDERSTANDING
WITH MAOISTS AS BIG ACHIEVEMENT

REF: A. KATHMANDU 2556

[1](#)B. KATHMANDU 2605

[1](#)C. KATHMANDU 2635

Classified By: CDA Elisabeth I. Millard, Reason 1.4 (b/d)

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) In a November 29 meeting with the Charge, Nepali Congress-Democratic (NC-D) Acting President Gopal Man Shrestha hailed the Maoist-Parties understanding a "breakthrough for peace and democracy," but noted that many details needed to be worked out. He worried that the Maoists might be using the political parties for their own ends. If the Maoists broke the cease-fire, Shrestha emphasized that NC-D would condemn the Maoist return to violence. NC-D is involved with preparing for its national convention and the seven-party "agitation" against the King. NC-D, like CPN-UML, appears to be pinning its hopes on the King responding positively to the understanding. End Summary.

Maoist-Parties Understanding an "Achievement," But Only Preliminary

[1](#)2. (C) Shrestha lauded the Maoist-Parties 12-point understanding (ref A) as a "big achievement." He noted that he hoped that, were the Palace to respond positively, Nepal could make real progress toward peace. NC-D Central Committee member Prakash Sharan Mahat, who participated in the meeting along with Central Committee member Sagar Rana, explained that the seven parties were "trying to make the Maoists realize that they were on an incorrect path and could not win." He added that if the Parties succeeded in convincing the Maoists to change course, this should be welcomed by the international community. Mahat stressed that the understanding was only preliminary; the parties and the Maoists still needed to work out many details.

Leery of Maoist Intentions

[1](#)3. (C) The NC-D leaders stressed that they shared our concern

about the Maoist intentions and were aware the Maoists might try to seize power. They acknowledged that the Maoists continued to hinder NC-D party activities in some areas, although overall there had been a "vast improvement." In certain areas, NC-D had to seek permission to work. In places where Maoists are firmly in control, NC-D had no choice but to hold joint programs with the Maoists, even though it was NC-D's policy not to have joint programs. Mahat commented that the Maoists were attempting to pose as the state authority. He said that the Parties remembered the Maoists' brutal history of dealing with the political parties. He added that the Maoists had targeted Party cadre much more than people associated with the Palace.

NC-D Will Disavow Maoist Violence

¶4. (C) The NC-D politicians stated that they would condemn the Maoists if they broke the cease-fire and returned to violence. They asserted that NC-D would be able to disassociate itself from the Maoists in that event. Shrestha noted that, per their understanding, the Maoists had promised to refrain from disturbing the seven-parties' activities in the countryside even if they broke the cease-fire. He emphasized that NC-D had not joined with the Maoists, and would not do so while they used violence. Mahat remarked that the Parties believed the Maoists' claim that they would lay down their weapons if the King accepted constitutional assembly elections. He admitted that if that did not happen, violence could continue.

All Depends on King's Response to the Understanding

¶5. (C) The NC-D leaders, like UML Leader MK Nepal (ref C), are waiting to see how King Gyanendra reacts upon his December 2 return to Nepal, and are hoping that his response will be positive. Shrestha commented that if the King responded favorably, he would be able to retain a role as a ceremonial monarch. The King needed to reverse his actions of February 1 and postpone municipal elections. Mahat noted that the King's response could help force the Maoists to stop their extortions, abductions and other acts of violence.

NC-D Preparing for National Convention

¶6. (C) The Acting NC-D President said the party was busy preparing for its national convention, to be held January 5, 6 and 7, as well as participating in the seven party "agitation." NC-D leaders were encouraged by the response to their membership drive. Shrestha estimated that the party had about 100,000 "active members" and about 1,000,000 "ordinary members." He noted that this party cadre had participated in the UML-organized meetings in Butwal, Pokhara, and Janakpur (ref B), and would participate in the December 2 demonstration in Kathmandu as well as those held by Nepali Congress. NC-D itself planned a meeting on December 11 in Kathmandu.

Comment

¶7. (C) While hopeful about the understanding, the NC-D leaders are more anxious than most UML leaders about its possible consequences. However, all of the Party leaders are apparently pinning their hopes on a positive response from Gyanendra. They do not appear to be developing a strategy in the event the King rejects the understanding.

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